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Dear Harold, June 9, 1989

With the first session of summer school just around the corner I thought I would write before I get too wrapped up in my classes. I finally got a chance to read Oswald in New Orleans last week. I found it fascinating and informative. That part of Oswald's background is now much clearer to me. The anti-Castro Cuban connection in the assassination seems compelling to me. I couldn't help but think about the so-called "Iran-Contra Affair" as something of a parallel to the covert support for the various Cuban exile groups intent on invading Cuba at that time. One can only imagine what kind of stink would have been caused had one of these exile groups been linked to Kennedy's assassination. I was also struck by the weird assortment of characters that are part of the story. I wondered what may have happened to two of them in particular: Dean Adams Andrews and FBI agent Warren deBrueys. Also, although I ~~would~~ can guess what the answer might be, what, if anything, did the House Select Committee on Assassinations do with some of the leads Garrison developed? I imagine that just as with the Warren Commission the role of the CIA was almost completely masked or ignored.

In reading Oswald in New Orleans I was again struck by the role of the establishment press in attacking Garrison and defending the government. Several months ago I read a book entitled On Bended Knee by Mark Hertsgaard which is a critical account of the press's relation to the Reagan Administration. The title tells you basically what that relation seemed to be. Many comments he made about the press in general seemed applicable to the Kennedy assassination. Let me quote one in particular:

> "It was an article of faith within the American press that everyone was free to say whatever they liked; there were no limits on opinion, and all serious views were given fair representation. In fact, however, subtle but definite limits were imposed on the nation's political debate by the press's definition of who constituted responsible, and thus quotable sources. As a practical matter, the definition of who was worth listening to was limited to official Washington: administration officials (past and present), members of Congress, the occasional, well-connected academic specialist...."
>
> "Emphasizing the statements and actions of officials above all else often resulted in woefully one-sided reporting and reduced the press to little more than a nominally independent mouthpiece of the government, a stenographer of power."

Do you believe that is a fair assessment? Does it aptly characterize much of the reporting on the JFK assassination?

I received my first book-of-the-month order last week, and I have gotten into Sheehan's book, A Bright Shining Lie. It is indeed excellent. That account of the funeral of Vann in the opening

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was incredible -- it brought out so many different facets of the war. One thing that troubles me, however, is the extent to which Sheehan attributes what was going on in Vietnam in the early 60's directly to Kennedy as if Kennedy had the kind of day-to-day involvement that Johnson later developed. It seems that the prevailing view of Kennedy these days is that he was much more of a hawk than a dove

I will be in touch. Hope you are fine. And please give my regards to Lillian.

Yours,

Berry